



# California Regional Water Quality Control Board

## Central Coast Region



Linda S. Adams  
Secretary for  
Environmental Protection

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Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

May 23, 2007

Dear Interested Party:

**Notice of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Scoping Meeting and Public Workshop on the Development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the lower Salinas River, Salinas River Lagoon, Salinas River Estuary, Tembladero Slough, Salinas Reclamation Canal, Alisal Creek, Gabilan Creek, Quail Creek, Santa Rita Creek, Chualar Creek, and Towne Creek, to Control the Discharge of Fecal Coliform.**

### PURPOSE

Central Coast Water Board staff (Water Board staff) will hold an outreach, CEQA scoping meeting and public workshop to discuss: 1) the development of TMDLs and Implementation Plans for the control of discharges of fecal coliform to the waters referenced above, and 2) a proposal to dedesignate the shellfish harvesting beneficial use from a subset of waters referenced above; collectively referred to as the Projects. The TMDLs will allocate pollutant loading capacities and establish an implementation plan to control fecal coliform discharges so that that receiving waters attain fecal coliform water quality standards for recreation beneficial uses; the TMDLs proposed are not protective of the shellfish harvesting beneficial use because this use is proposed for dedesignation. The applicable water quality standards for these TMDLs are:

*Discharges may not cause receiving water concentration of fecal coliform to exceed the following:*

*Fecal coliform concentration, based on a minimum of not less than five samples for any 30-day period, shall not exceed a log mean of 200/100mL, nor shall more than ten percent of total samples during any 30-day period exceed 400/100mL.*

Water Board staff are also considering equivalent *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) TMDLs consistent with criteria recommended by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

### BACKGROUND

Some of these waters were listed as impaired by fecal coliform on the States' "List of Water Quality Limited Segments" (List) pursuant to Clean Water Act Section 303(d) because they exceeded the fecal coliform water quality standard. Others are tributary to one of the listed water bodies and found to be exceeding either the fecal coliform water quality standard or the USEPA recommended criteria for *E. coli*. All of these waters exceeded the fecal coliform water quality standard and/or the USEPA recommended

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criteria recently. The Clean Water Act requires the State to develop TMDLs for waters on the list and allows the State to develop TMDLs for impaired waters that are not on the list. State law requires development of implementation plans to achieve the TMDLs.

Water Board staff conducted investigations on the nature and causes of impairments, the legal standards that must be met in these waters, and strategies to reduce the amount of fecal coliform and *E. coli* discharged to these waters in order to achieve the applicable water quality standards. As part of these investigations, Water Board staff determined that the designated use of shellfish harvesting in the Salinas River Lagoon, Salinas River Estuary, and the Tembladero Slough, has not occurred, nor has water quality been sufficient to support this use, since November 28, 1975, or before. Therefore, the beneficial use can be removed for these waters.

Water Board staff anticipates proposing the TMDLs, implementation plans and dedesignation of the shellfish harvesting beneficial uses to the Water Board for adoption in 2008. The TMDLs or implementation plans may require the installation of pollution control equipment or establish a performance standard or treatment requirement.

#### CEQA SCOPING MEETING AND PUBLIC WORKSHOP CONDUCT AND SCHEDULE

This meeting and workshop will provide participants with: 1) an explanation and understanding of the Projects, 2) an opportunity to comment on the Projects, and 3) an opportunity to comment on the appropriate scope and content of the environmental analysis and environmental documentation for these Projects to be prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the Water Board's certified regulatory program for basin planning (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15251, subdivision (g); and Title 23, Section 3775 et seq).

Interested persons are specifically requested to provide information about:

- How they or responsible parties would foreseeably comply with the TMDL;
- The reasonably foreseeable significant environmental impacts associated with those means of compliance;
- Specific evidence supporting that such impacts are reasonably foreseeable, and describing the magnitude (how significant) of the impacts;
- Reasonable alternative means of compliance that would have less significant adverse environmental impacts;
- Reasonable mitigation measures that would minimize any unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the means of compliance.

Water Board staff will consider issues raised and comments provided, both on the appropriate scope and content of the environmental documentation and on the Project, in the final reports that will be presented to the Water Board.

Water Board staff will accept verbal comments at the Public Workshop and written comments received by Wednesday, June 27, 2007. Water Board staff will not prepare written responses to each individual comment received, but will incorporate written responses to all significant environmental points in the final reports that will be provided to the Water Board. Water Board staff will prepare written responses to individual comments submitted during the formal public comment period that will be conducted prior to hearing by the Water Board planned for 2008.

**Workshop Time and Location:**

**Date:** June 20, 2007

**Time:** 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

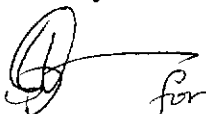
**Address:** Salinas Agricultural Commissioner's Office, 1428 Abbott Street, Salinas, CA 93901. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Christopher Rose at (805) 542-4770 at least 5 working days prior to the meeting. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 1-800-735-2929 or voice line at 1-800-735-2922.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Questions regarding CEQA Scoping or the Projects should be directed to Christopher Rose at (805) 542-4770 or [crose@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:crose@waterboards.ca.gov). Please mail written comments to Christopher Rose at: 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-7906.

A Project Summary will be available on or before May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at the Water Board website at: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/>. The Project Summary will also be available by request at the office of the Central Coast Water Board; please contact: Christopher Rose at 805-542-4770

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Briggs", with a horizontal line extending to the right. Below the signature, the word "for" is written in a cursive script.

Roger W. Briggs  
Executive Officer

cc: Lori Okun, State Water Resources Control Board, Salinas River Fecal Coliform TMDLs IPL

File: Salinas River and Tributaries Fecal Coliform TMDLs